

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 13908 061714Z

43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 SAB-01 A-01 OPR-02

SY-05 PER-01 AID-05 MMO-01 SCCT-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 /095 W

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O 061510Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7152

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIROITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITYYY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TELAVIV PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

DIA WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 13908 061714Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 13908

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, LE

SUBJ: LEBANON OFF THE MAT BUT NOT ON ITS FEET

REF: BEIRUT 13834 (5 NOV 75 1445Z)

1. SUMMARY: LIKE A BOXER PUNCH-DRUNK FROM FOUR GRUELING ROUNDS OF PUNISHMENT, BKEIRUT CONTINUES NOV 6 TO RISE FROM THE CANVAS; THE LEGS ARE WOBBLY, THE VISION BLURRED. THERE ARE RISING HOPES BUT AS YET LITTLE CONFIDENCE, THAT THE CITY WILL NOT HAVE TO ANSWER THE BELL FOR ROUND 5. END SUMMARY.

2. BEIRUT AND MOST OF LEBANON ENJOYING ANOTHER DAY OF CALM NOV6, WITH ONLY RARE BURSTS OF MACHINEGUN FIRE TO MAR THE FAMILIAR CIVILIAN NOISE POLLUTION OF HAMRA AND OTHER REAWAKENING COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS. TWO ROCKETS WERE FIRED INTO ASHRAFIYEH OVERNIGHT, BUT GENERAL ABSENCE OF BACKGROUND EXPLOSIONS ALMOST EERIE. DESPITE CALM, LEBANESE VENTURING OUT IN FALL FINERY WEAR A WARY EXPRESSION AND COMPETENT OBSERVERS ARE NOT RPT NOT PREPARED TO DECLARE PEACE IN OUR TIME. SOME, IN FACT, ARE PREDICITING A RETURN TO ARMS AS EARLY AS NEXT MONDAY. TRIPOLI REPORTEDLY IS TENSE FOLLOWING DISCOVERY OF UNIDENTIFIED BODY, BUT WAVE OF KIDNAPPING IN BEIRUT IS APPARENTLY FINISHED AS OF THIS REPORT.

3. TODAY'S NEWSPAPERS CARRY REPORTS OF PRES FRANGIE'S PRAISE FOR "KARAMISM" AND PRIMIN'S PERSISTENCE DURING NOV 5 CABINET MEETING. IT IS NNOT YET CLEAR WHAT PROMPTED THIS UNCHARACTERISTIC OUTBURST, BUT THE CYNICAL OBSERVERS ON THE SCENE ARE DIAGNOSING IT AS A CASE OF "IF-YOU-CAN'T-BEAT-THEM-JOIN-THEM (PARTICULARLY WHEN THEY SEEM SUCCESSFUL)". ON THIS NOTE, HOWEVER, CABINET SESSION WAS OFF TO SMOOTH START AND ATMOSPHERE IS DESCRIBED AS "GOOD". CABINET, WHICH WILL PROBABLY MEET AGAIN NOV 8, INTER ALIA (A) APPROPRIATED LL 18 MILLION FOR ARMORED VEHICLES, ETC., FOR INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES: (B) DISCUSSED INTERNATIONAL (READ FRENCH) INITIATIVES; AND (C) CONSIDERED MEASURE TO ENSURE RESUMPTION OF NORMAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. HIGHER COORDINATION COMM (RECENTLY EXPANDED TO ENCOMPASS ALL IDENTIFIABLE LEBANESE FACTIONS AND "MODERATE" CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 13908 061714Z

PALESTINIANS) CONTINUED ITS WORK AND FOCUSSED NOV 5 ON ENDING KIDNAPPING AND SURRENDERING PERPETRATORS TO CRIMIAL COURTS. LEBANESE ARMY, WHICH HAS ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL ROADS, ANNOUNCED ORDERS TO FIE UPON ARMED ELEMENTS ON THESE THOROUGHFARES AND ACTUALL ARRESTED 20 PERSONS IN HAZMIYEH YESTERDAY WHEN THEY ATTEMPTED TO SET UP A ROADBLOCK.

4. NOW THE BAD NEWS. (A) PHALANGIST ELEMENTS REMAIN THIS

MORNING IN HOLIDAY INN AND CANADIAN MILITARY ATTACHE REPORTS THAT ENTRY IS FORBIDDEN TO ANYONE NOT HOLDING A PASS FROM THE PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS. BOTH SIDES ARE ACCUSING THE OTHER OF BAD FAITH IN OBSERVING TERMS OF THE CEASEFIRE AND CITY REMAINS MINUTES (ONE HOUR AT MOST) FROM RESUMPTION OF CLASHES AT ANY GIVEN TIME; (B) BOTH SIDES CONTINUING TO REARM AND REPROVISION WITH PUBLIC ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO VESSEL AT JOUNIEH (PHALANGIST) AND A USUALLY-RELIABLE SOURCE REPORTING THAT ANOTHER SHIP OFF-LOADED AT SIDON (PALESTINIAN LEFTIST) WITHIN THE LAST FOUR TO FIVE DAYS; (C) KARAME/CHAMOUN RELATIONSHIP IS PATCHED UP SOMEWHAT, BUT DIFFERENCES, WHICH COULD EASILY SURFACE UNDER STRESS, PERSIST, CHAMOUN STILL WANTS ARMY TO ENTER IN FULL FORCE WITH FLAGS FLYING WHEREAS KARAME, WHO HAS RECENTLY INCREASED THE ARMY'S ROLE, PREFERS TO INSINUATE IT AS NEEDED AT MORE MEASURED PACE (BEIRUT 12296). OFF-LOADING OF SHIP AT JOUNIEH IS APPARENTLY BONE OF CONTENTION BETWEEN KARAME ON ONE HAND AND FRANGIE/CHAMOUN ON OTHER. PRIMIN COMPLAINED NOV 6 TO AMBASSADOR THAT ARMY HAS NOT RPT NOT IMPLEMENTED HIS ORDER TO HALT DIS-EMBARKATION OF SHIP'S CARGO. ALL INGREDIENTS OF A FURTHER FLARE-UP CONTINUE TO BE PRESENT AS GOL TURNS ITS HAND TO EFFORTS TO CLEAR AWAY THE FALLOUT FROM RECENT STRIFE.

5. LARGE NUMBER OF SHOPS AND SOME BANKS ARE OPEN. MOST BANKS SET EXCHANGE RATE AT LL2.25 PER DOLLAR (BUYING) AND LL 2.60 PER DOLLAR (SELLING). WIDE DIFFERENCE (NORMALLY ONLY TWO OR THREE PIASTRES) IS MEANT TO DISCOURAGE TRANSACTIONS UNTIL MONDAY IN ORDER TO ALLOW TIME FOR BANKS TO PROCESS BACK-LOG OF PAPERWORK AND FOR MARKET TO STABILIZE. ZGHORTAWI OIL TANK DRIVERS ATTEMPTED TO TAKE DELIVERIES FROM IPC REFINERY IN TRIPOLI, BUT WERE BLOCKED BY TRIPOLITANIANS; IN RETALIATION, ZGHORTAWIS BLOCKED ROAD TO REFINERY. NEVERTHELESS, OIL MINISTRY REMAINS OPTIMISTIC THAT, IF CURRENT LULL CONTINUES, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 BEIRUT 13908 061714Z

THIS DISPUTE WILL BE SOLVED IN TIME FOR DELIVERIES TO BEIRUU ON NOV 10 RPT 10.

6. ALL AMCITS REMAIN SAFE TO OUR KNOWLEDGE. AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL IS TOYING WITH IDEA OF OPENING MINI-SCHOOL NOV 10, IF CONDITIONS PERMIT. GODLEY

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